Volume XCIV No. 2 March 19, 1971 40 cents

commonweal

ST. CHARLES SEMINARY LIBRARY
MAR 1 1 RECD
CARTHAGENA STATION, CELINA, OHIO
NEWSPAPER
ST CHARLES SEM LIBRARY
CARTHAGENA STATION
CELINA OH 45822
A-68108 12-71

HENRY TEN KORTENAAR **THE SYNOD OF SMALL EXPECTATIONS**

ISIDORE SILVER **RAMSEY CLARK, CRIME AND JUSTICE**

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR. **LOVE STORY: HEARTTHROB AND HEARTBURN**

MISHIMA AND THE SPIRIT OF JAPAN

MICHAEL GALLAGHER RICHARD HALLORAN

THE ABCs OF ABM

PETER J. OGNIBENE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEWS & VIEWS

The Clergy Drain

Whatever additional evidence is needed to document the "hemorrhage" among Catholic clergy is provided in the current issue of *Diaspora*, newsletter of the Society of Priests for a Free Ministry.

Its statistics—based on the confidential memorandum sent bishops and major superiors of the world by the European organization Pro Mundi Vita, and on research of Belgian sociologist François Houtart—reveal a 20-fold increase (2,175 percent!) in the number of requests from priests for reduction to the lay state between 1963 and 1970.

These are the figures:

Year	Number Requests
1963	167
1964	640
1965	1,128
1966	1,418
1967	1,769
1968	2,263
1969	2,963
1970	3,800

In eight years, therefore, there has been a total of 14,148 requests for laicization from the 540,000 priests active in the church.

But this is only part of the "hemorrhage." As *Diaspora* noted, the figures do not include those who have left the ministry without bothering to ask for laicization.

A conservative estimation of this group swells to between 22,000 and 25,000 the number seeking "out" in the last eight years, according to *Diaspora*—more than 5 percent of the world's Catholic clergy.

The greatest toll is said to be in the 30-45 age group. Approximately 10 percent of this group has left.

Diaspora publishes the figures in the context of discussion about the Synod to convene in Rome on Sept. 30. One of the two key topics to be discussed there is "the priestly ministry."

Diaspora's wish is that the Synod will consider seriously proposals emanating from meetings of priests for a free ministry here and in Europe. Principal among the recommendations are a non-stipendiary ministry (option to pursue a gainful employment); freedom to be involved in social and political issues; and optional celibacy.

Diaspora is not without hope. It takes heart from a recent article, "The Crisis of the Priesthood in the Church of Today," appearing in *Civilta Cattolica*, semi-official Vatican periodical.

"This article is fragmentary and moderate," says *Diaspora*, "but its very appearance is a clear symptom that Rome is beginning to realize what is happening."

Postscript on Torres

Was Camilo Torres, the Colombian priest turned guerrilla, done in by a police informer?

Speculation is rife in Lima that such may be the case.

The speculation is fed by the resurrection as a police worker of a guerrilla listed as having died alongside Torres in a gun battle with soldiers, Feb. 15, 1966.

The man is Salvador Afanador, once described as a top strategist of the National Liberation Army (ELN), the group joined by Torres.

A military bulletin of Feb. 17, 1966, listed Torres (only by name), Afanador (prominently identified) and three other guerrillas as dead.

Now the story is that Afanador survived; turned himself over to the police last September, out of fear of being executed by the ELN; then signed on with the police.

Skeptics are numerous. They feel Afanador could have been working for the police from the beginning.

Play It Again, Sam

The following from Western Union, 2/26/71:

JAMES O'GARA, COMMONWALTH 232 MADISON AV NYK

MAYOR L INDSAY WUPL CALL FMR "NAIGHBORHOOD GOVERNXENTU" TO ANSQRE ASUENTIAL SERVUCEU, DEFUSE RACIAL AMD ETHNIC TENUIOCU, AND UHARE POWER WITH THA PEOQUE, IACDIWILL OUTLINA HIS LON4-,302-:' 5.50 TOP URBANOLOGISTS AGIL\UNCHEON OF ALLDAY CONFERENCE MONDAY, MARCH 1, 12:30, AMERICAN JAWISH KOXMITTEA, 11) EAST 56 STCEET. KIRST MAJOR MAATIN 9, ,—$ 94 ,38;#?94#99$ &9;34, .3,5', COUPONURED BQ AJC ANJ \SQRACUSA \UNIVERSITY MAXWELL GRAJUATA SCHOOW OK CITZENUHIPIANJIPUBLIC AFFAIRS, ALUO FEATUREUIALAN CAMP3)), VAXWELL SCHOML JEAN, ANB IRVING LEVINE, DIRECTOJ AJC 'U ETHNICUPROJAKT. QOUR COVERAGE UNVITED AT LUNKHEON OR XULL JAY ULARTIN 9:30 A.M. KONLAVT MATAWIE KLATGW, PPAZA 1-4000 MORTON YARMBM A50 1 12;-0 165851 9:-1 A.M. 1-4100.

No wonder New York's in trouble.

Odds and Ends

—Pittsburgh priest-activist Charles Owen Rice speaks to *America* columnist S. J. Adamo on the most frightening of possibilities: "One is the thought that Bill Buckley may become President some day, and the other equal disaster would occur if Greeley became Pope."

NCR editor Bob Hoyt adds his two cents' worth: "I wish he [Greeley] would leave something for God and history to decide."

—The *Ann Arbor News* quotes the parish bulletin of St. Thomas Church, Ann Arbor, on plans for a weekly Monday evening Mass for peace:

"It will be offered to pray for an end to the war in Vietnam, in Cambodia and in Laos. Other countries will be added as they are invaded."

—For March 17 meditations, a note from Williston Walker's *A History of the Christian Church* (Scribners; revised ed. 1959): "Born about 389, possibly in southern Wales, Patrick was the son of a deacon and grandson of a priest. His training was therefore Christian."

—Finally, saving the best to last, Spiro T. Agnew to the Catholic press via Ed Wall interview: "There's never been less repression in any country in history than there is today in the United States." The funny thing here, is that Spiro will be believed by most of his audience.

JOHN DEEDY

Vadillo, *Siempre*, Mexico

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Vouching for Education

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Maurice R. Berube is more enthusiastic about the voucher plan than anything in his article [Jan. 29] justifies. In particular, he fails to show how any voucher plan would come even close to achieving its principal objective, providing adequate education for underprivileged children.

Under any version of the voucher plan, the public schools would be labeled as second-class institutions. The public school is where you would go if you could not get into a nonpublic school. As a result, the public schools would lose their constituency. Public interest would be concentrated on the nonpublic schools and any chance of generating sufficient public pressure to bring about reforms in the public schools would be gone.

It is true that the Jencks version of the voucher plan contains an elaborate set of provisions designed to insure that private schools aided by the plan will be integrated—racially, economically and educationally. But Professor Jencks is not going to control the legislatures that adopt the enabling legislation or the administrators who enforce it. Any plan that actually went into effect would benefit chiefly—if not exclusively—those children whom it is easiest to educate. Undoubtedly, a few dedicated parents, here or there, would attempt to establish schools for their children but this is no answer to the massive educational deficit of millions of undereducated pupils.

Mr. Berube says that criticism of the voucher plan is unfounded because it is not the aim of voucher advocates to rejuvenate parochial schools or to supply a means of avoiding school integration. Of course, it is not their aim—but it would be the effect.

The drive for vouchers has unfortunately diverted attention from what really needs to be done—making the public schools work for underprivileged

(Continued on page 44)

NEWS & VIEWS: 26 **CORRESPONDENCE: 27**
EDITORIALS: 27
THE SYNOD OF SMALL EXPECTATIONS: *Henry ten Kortenaar* **28**
OF BUDGETS & MEDIA: *Peter Steinfels* **30**
THE ABCs OF ABM: *Peter J. Ognibene* **31**
THE POLITICS OF SUICIDE: *Richard T. Halloran* **34**
IMPOSSIBLE BEAUTY: *Michael Gallagher* **36**
VERSE: *Biron Walker* **40**
THE SCREEN: *Colin L. Westerbeck, Jr.* **40**
BOOKS: 41
Sketch on p. 31: Seles, Magyar Szo, *Yugoslavia*

JAMES O'GARA: *Editor* JOHN DEEDY: *Managing Editor*
PETER STEINFELS: *Associate Editor* ANNE ROBERTSON: *Editorial Assistant*
PHILIP T. HARTUNG, COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.: *Movies* JOHN FANDEL: *Poetry*
EDWARD S. SKILLIN: *Publisher* JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*
COMMONWEAL *A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature and the Arts.*
Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y.
Printed in the USA and published weekly,
except biweekly Christmas-New Year's and June to mid-September,
by Commonweal Publishing Co., 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016
MUrray Hill 3-2042. *Copyright © 1971 Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc.*
US and Canada, $12 a year. Foreign $14. Single copies 40¢

HAVING IT BOTH WAYS

Another Earth Day observance is coming up, and its approach inevitably invites assessment of the Administration's performance on what Mr. Nixon himself defined as the "now or never" issue for Americans—environmental pollution. We are already into the third year of Mr. Nixon's term of office and the second year of the decade which he dedicated as the one in which the ecological debts to the past must be paid. Has Mr. Nixon moved nation and people toward the discharge of that responsibility?

Yes and no. Certainly Mr. Nixon has articulated a philosophy and outlined policy for a new ecological value code which is bright and promising. His messages on the environment have been the most comprehensive of any President's. He has coordinated the agencies of government dealing with conservation; he has established an Environmental Protection Agency, and named a Council on Environmental Quality to advise and assist the White House on ecological questions; he has signed bills. With large pomp and circumstances, Mr. Nixon would clear the air, clean the sky, wash the winds —to borrow from Eliot; he would preserve the waters, muffle noise, curb the exploitation of natural resources. He would do all these things and more. Wonderful—except that he isn't, and will not until deed matches intention.

The trouble with the Nixon approach is that at one point or another vision is blurred by the pragmatics of government and business. Budgets, profits and consumer demands enter the equation, and program bogs down in ambiguities. An example is Mr. Nixon's following up the filing in Congress of his tough 1971 environmental package with assurances to officers of more than 200 major companies that industry will not be "scapegoats" in the drive for an improved environment. Actions such as that provide the clue that ecology is mistress, not spouse, of the Administration, and that Mr. Nixon's aim is to have it both ways—business as usual and an environment restored. But he is not going to be so lucky. Some hard choices have to be made if the environment is to be reclaimed, but these hard choices Mr. Nixon is reluctant about making. So long as he remains this way, the noblest of his environmental plans are fated.

Nothing points up the desire of the Administration to have its cake and eat it too than the effort to keep the supersonic transport plane (SST) in development. The lessons of the British-French experimentations with the Concorde—its runaway costs, frightful noise and shattering booms—are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

discounted. Even the advice of Mr. Nixon's own Council on Environmental Quality is dismissed. In its first report last year, the Council cautioned on supersonic jets, citing the vapor trails these jets would spread across the stratosphere—trails which could build, in the windless altitudes where the SST would fly, into a permanent cloud cover, with Lord knows what effects on weather and health. Yet when the House Appropriations Committee held hearings earlier this month on a request for $290 million to continue work on the SST, among those the Administration wheeled out to support the bill were its resident environmentalists, Russell E. Train of said Council and William D. Ruckelshaus, head of the Environmental Protection Agency. Ruckelshaus was programmed to endorse not only the $290 million under consideration, but $500 million for the completion of SST prototypes by 1973.

In several senses, Ruckelshaus' testimony was the ultimate in cynicisms. One would expect the director of the Environmental Protection Agency to be a defender of ecological causes, not a lobbyist for programs which could further upset environmental balances. And under no circumstances would one expect from such a person an economics pitch—the need to preserve an internationally competitive U.S. aircraft industry—especially when by his own admission "critical environmental questions" remain to be answered. The irony becomes the more startling when one recalls that only the month before Mr. Ruckelshaus was urging on business and industry the cultivation of an "environmental ethic."

It is sad to see lofty principle devolve to one-dimensional economics, but criticism should probably be less Ruckelshaus' than the one who sent him on his curious mission—the President. It is he who calls the shots. Unfortunately, those shots will be errant until Mr. Nixon, to repeat, comes to grips with the fact that he has to choose between alternatives which will often be mutually exclusive. The SST is a perfect case in point. He must also confront the fact that the good life can no longer be measured solely in terms of goods, services and an expanding GNP, not if the good life is also to mean an enriching environment. He must, in a word, develop the environmental ethic Mr. Ruckelshaus treats so casually.

PENTAGON POWER

In recent months there has been almost a flood of articles and books on the subject of the Pentagon's power—not as much as the subject requires, but large enough that there may be some danger that people will get tired of the subject and tune it out, and this even though little effective action has yet been taken to curb the military power. Documentation on the influence of the military-industrial complex therefore abounds; the problem is not that such evidence is missing or overstated as that the reading or viewing public may not take it seriously enough.

For this reason, then, let us add one small footnote to the evidence on the problem. Last week in a lead editorial in these pages we cited findings from and praised a CBS television documentary called "The Selling of the Pentagon," an enterprising effort which dramatically portrayed the propaganda efforts carried out by the military and financed by the victim-taxpayer. Since that editorial was written, Representative F. Edward Hebert, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, also responded to the program, accusing CBS of "one of the most horrible examples" of anti-military propaganda he had ever encountered. Fair enough, perhaps, if wrong-headed, but then came the mailed fist inside the Congressional glove: in retaliation, Congressman Hebert threatened, he would look into the lucrative contracts the government had signed with CBS and the other networks to promote a volunteer army. The stakes: $10 million. All unwittingly, then, Representative Hebert of course drove home the basic point of the documentary he attacked: if anyone doubts the power of the military to win friends and influence networks, the fact of a $10 million advertising contract which can be turned on or off at will should help set him straight. As for Representative Hebert: Q.E.D., Congressman, and thank you.

The Synod of Small Expectations

There are some pretty tricky questions coming up at the next Synod of bishops which will be held in the fall of this year, but so far nobody seems to bother. The reason for the strange silence surrounding the coming event is that nobody really expects the Synod to come up with a solution for the problems it is going to discuss. The two past meetings have made it abundantly clear that it has no initiative and no responsibility of its own, but is only meant to assist the Pope with advice and information; it is therefore nothing but one more organ of his exclusive and supreme ruling power. This is why, despite its recent institution (dating back to a *Motu proprio* of 1965), the Synod has already taken on the dusty appearance of most Roman institutions: for all the difference it has made to the church it might have been in existence since the Council of Trent, instead of Vatican II. For all we know, its advice may make all the difference in the subsequent papal decisions, but again, it may not, and the Pope has already announced that in some cases it will not.

One of these is the question of celibacy. After the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

declaration of the Dutch bishops in January 1970, Pope Paul let it be known that he considers it his sacred duty to maintain the tradition of the West, and will under no circumstance allow a married priest to continue in the ministry. In the same letter to his Secretary of State he also expressed his misgivings about another proposal (made by bishops "whose zeal we know"—no offense meant), viz., to confer the priesthood on mature married persons: "may it not be a very dangerous illusion to think that a similar change could be limited to cases of true and extreme necessity? Might not others see it as an apparently easy answer to the lack of vocations?" In these conditions a realistic discussion can hardly be expected; moreover, the same bishops who will be consulted have already given their answer in the loud hosannas which greeted the Pope's declaration. (One of the first such messages came from the Belgian bishops and was signed by Cardinal Suenens, who three months later told *Le Monde* that only a frank discussion would bring a solution; one feels tempted to predict the content of an interview in early 1972.)

However, the freedom to marry is only one aspect of a huge problem, and it can only be deplored that it is likely to condition the whole discussion on the priestly ministry. Judging from the names of the papal commission which must prepare the synodal document on the subject, there is not much chance that any new or imaginative solutions will be proposed (and, of course, the principle itself is debatable: the crisis of the clergy is felt on the local plane, not in Rome, and solutions are being sought in the local churches. This is where the discussion should start, not from a document prepared in some Roman meeting room).

There is more hope for the second subject which the synod will treat: justice in the world. The preparatory document is in the hands of the capable Commission for Justice and Peace, and is said to be in an advanced stage. It may even have more to say about the role of the priest in society than the one on the priesthood itself. At a moment when priests, not only in Eastern Europe, but also in young African countries, in Latin America and in the United States are in prison for what they believe to be their Christian duty, it is time for the bishops to consider whether the Gospel is always on the side of law and order. The benevolent neutrality towards right-wing regimes and "middle-of-the-road" democracies which the church has observed for the last hundred years appears more and more a one-way political choice, and it is not the choice many of these priests have made. Not a few bishops, especially Europeans and Latin Americans, are inclined to admit, and even to encourage, a new prophetical role of the church and of individual Catholics in this field.

The danger is the same which made the conciliar decree *Gaudium et Spes* so much less incisive than it might have been. It will be remembered how much enthusiastic support there was at the Council for broad and beautiful principles, but also how this unanimity broke down before some of their practical applications. To quote only a few examples: the statement on conscientious objection was watered down, and the one on atomic arms even considerably changed (after a good deal of lobbying by a group of U.S. bishops, convinced that their country stood for the defense of Christianity).

Whether or not it is true, in any practical sense, that "the joy and hope, sorrow and fear of modern man are also the joy and hope, sorrow and fear" of the church (as the famous opening words of *Gaudium et Spes* proclaim), it is at least clear that "modern man" has no need of any further statements in the same vein. To be of any use, the synodal document must be as concrete as possible, and there seems to be no better way to accomplish this than by concentrating on *injustice* in the world today. The World Council of Churches has given an example of this (and also of the reactions which must be expected). A plain indictment of, say, genocide in Indochina and Portuguese Africa, torture in Brazil, repression of minorities in Spain, would go against a long tradition of prudent silence, would hurt the feelings of several bishops, would contrast with the rules of Vatican diplomacy. But would not anything less weaken the already low credibility of the church's prophetical pretensions? This, I think, is the dilemma the bishops will have to face.

On the third subject, the so-called Fundamental Law, apparently no discussion will be allowed, but, according to a recent announcement, the Synod will only receive a "communication." This top-secret project of a "church constitution" was sharply criticized last year, when various papers managed to publish the then latest version. Theologians and canon lawyers agreed that the document twisted the teachings of the Council (and of the Gospel as well) to its own purpose, namely to reassert the narrow centralized ecclesiology of preconciliar times. A new version has now been sent to all bishops' conferences, but rumors have it that it is practically identical with the criticized text.

The general indifference on the matter, though understandable and even healthy, is also potentially dangerous, for the attempt to reduce the new self-understanding of the church to a juridical construction, if allowed to succeed, can only have disastrous results. The matter clearly not only regards a small ruling group, but the whole church, and the bishops, who have the document in their hands, now have the opportunity of extending the discussion to their own people. Solidarity and trust can only be reciprocal. If the bishops neglect this opportunity, they have but themselves to blame, if at the next meeting of the Synod they will not feel sustained by any interest at home. HENRY TEN KORTENAAR

(Henry ten Kortenaar is a writer and translator who lives in Rome.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OF BUDGETS & MEDIA

PETER STEINFELS

LAST FEBRUARY 20 the National Urban Coalition presented a "Counter-Budget" for the United States. That was not just an advertising gimmick. It was a 400-page book which projects yearly spending from 1971 to 1976. It proposes to do away with poverty as presently defined by 1975. It also proposes a national health insurance program costing $63 billion in 1976, gradual cuts in defense spending, increased spending on education, housing, mass transportation, and even revenue-sharing.

The Urban Coalition's "Counter-Budget" is not a "wish list." It is carefully worked out, with proposals for tax increases and tax reforms to provide the revenue for government programs. Hard choices are faced: for example, the study is candid about giving the cities, the poor and education a higher priority than environmental programs. Cuts in military spending are not simply some vague pot of gold at the end of the rainbow but are outlined and justified in detail.

The Urban Coalition isn't really trying to sell the public a pre-packaged, ready-to-wear, sure-fire solution in easy installments. Primarily, the hope is "to stimulate a vastly more informed public debate on what national priorities ought to be."

Not much luck, so far. The "Counter-Budget" was reported on *page 40* of the *New York Times* the next day. Neither of the newsmagazines has picked up the story. The *Washington Post* ran a good story on page 2, but I doubt if it was emulated much throughout the country. What did you hear or see on radio and television?

How common are the remarks that we need fewer dramatic, symbolic gestures and more concrete, detailed proposals. What could be more concrete and detailed than a book recommending specific budget proposals for the next five years? And yet concrete, detailed proposals, especially ones heavily burdened with numbers . . . well, they don't make very exciting news stories, and they are virtually impossible as grist for the visual mills of television. The spokesmen for the National Urban Coalition might have been advised to burn a pile of copies of the Nixon budget.

The "Counter-Budget" will have a second chance. It will be published by Praeger in April. Will it be reviewed? How prominently? And again, how can excitement be generated about what is, after all, only the basic question of how we can mobilize our resources to make America livable? "We hope," said Jack Hood Vaughn, the president of the Urban Coalition, "that we will have a best-seller—nonfiction." But Praeger is not known in the publishing world for very effective promotional efforts. Perhaps the book could be titled or subtitled "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the Budget But Were Afraid to Ask." Erich Segal might do an introduction. That's jest, of course, or maybe only half-jest; but the problem of how subjects like this can be channeled through the media to reach large audiences is central to our doubts and hopes and questions about the working of democracy today.

And while on the subject of media, it would be a stingy observer who would not grant the tremendous improvement in the newsweeklies within the last few years. Recent issues of *Time* and *Newsweek* carried excellent reports on the welfare crisis, with *Time's* having the edge. (*Newsweek*, I heard, got wind of the *Time* cover, and rushed their own; this compulsion to want to be fustest with the samest is still one of the newsweeklies' drawbacks.) *Newsweek* may have rounded off a lot of corners on its cover story on "The American Jew," but it deserves much credit for a solid examination in a delicate area. *Time* then contributed a useful metaphor and a good comprehensive view in its supplement on "The Cooling of America"; only to be surpassed, I think, by *Newsweek's* beautifully presented study on justice in America.

Ah, but eternal prodding is the price of quality. What about the complaint in *News & Views* [Feb. 19] that *Newsweek* had taken on three new foreign-affairs columnists, all of the same establishment stripe? Their columns to date: (1) a plea for a community of developed nations, essentially an American-European-Japanese concert, an interesting idea but also one with doubtful consequences for the underdeveloped nations which are only beginning (as in the oil settlement at Teheran) to be able to muscle better trade terms from the industrialized world; (2) a warning against premature announcements of the end of the Cold War; (3) a criticism of the use of "doctrines" of sweeping generalizations in foreign policy; (4) an argument against withdrawing troops from Europe; (5) another argument against withdrawing troops from Europe; (6) a favorable review of the President's State of the World report.

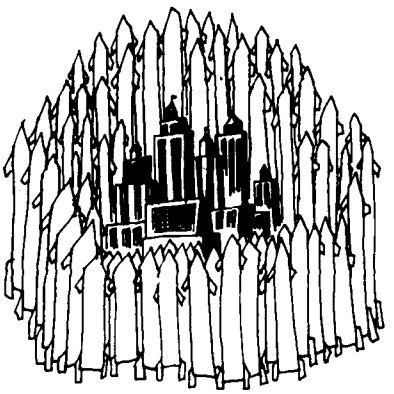
All of these columns have been quiet and reasonable. All but one have been supportive of the current foreign policy—and that one was not really critical either. What is clearest is that not one of these statesmen-journalists has written anything that could possibly risk his future employ in someone or another's State Department. In short, *Newsweek*, which also features the hawkish Stewart Alsop on its last page, has no one to replace the independent, critical position of Walter Lippmann. I think they could do better, both in the name of independence and in the name of diversity.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE ABCs OF ABM

A serious obstacle to this nation's pursuit of worldwide peace and stability

PETER J. OGNIBENE



Those who had been hoping for a break in the arms race had some of their optimism dashed by President Nixon's recent State of the World message. While he did acknowledge that "the Soviet Union in the past few months appears to have slowed the deployment of land-based strategic missile-launchers," he went on to say that "the significance of this development is not clear." He conceded that "the USSR could be exercising self-restraint," but he also suggested that "the slowdown could presage the deployment of an altogether new missile system." (According to *The Washington Post*: work has stopped at 12 of the 18 SS-9 ICBM sites which were begun last spring, and no new sites have been started.)

Unfortunately there appears to have been no change in the Nixon *Weltanschauung* (to wit: if something apparently good comes from Moscow, it is most likely a disguise for nefarious goings on). Conveniently, the President seems to have forgotten that his principal justification for Safeguard was to counteract the build-up in Soviet SS-9s. It takes approximately one year to make an SS-9 site operational—a process observable from our reconnaissance satellites. So, even if the SS-9, slowdown does "presage the deployment of an altogether new missile system," it will take a considerable amount of time to build and activate any new system—something equally observable.

No one can know with absolute certainty the motive behind the Soviet slowdown, but it is worth at least a reciprocal gesture such as a reduction in the pace of Safeguard deployment. That apparently is not to be. The President has asked Congress for $1.28 billion to expand Safeguard—one quarter of a billion dollars more than last year's authorization. On top of that lamentable decision, Mr. Nixon seems to have rejected out of hand the possibility of concluding an initial agreement restricting both American and Russian ABM systems.

In December at the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks in Helsinki, the Soviet Union proposed limiting ABM defenses to the Washington and Moscow areas. While the substance of that proposal is transparently self-serving (the obsolescent Moscow ABM is already in place), it points the way to a *procedure* which could prove fruitful. (It should be remembered that the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty became possible only after we had abandoned our insistence for a total ban policed by on-site inspection. The test ban has been in effect now for almost eight years.)

The SALT negotiations reconvene in Vienna this month. Hopefully the Nixon Administration will abandon its unbending stand for a comprehensive initial agreement and be willing to consider stopping defensive systems first. Certainly it can afford to make the no-risk gesture of slowing the rate of deployment of Safeguard. Failing to respond favorably to the SS-9 slowdown could eventually lead to a breakdown in SALT. If that unhappy event comes to pass, there will undoubtedly be strong pressure from the Pentagon and congressional hawks to increase ABM. That would be both unwise and unnecessary.

ABM is a serious obstacle to this nation's pursuit of worldwide peace and stability. If the President fails to recognize the folly of perpetuating ABM, Congress will get another chance when it votes on the appropriations for Safeguard. In the hope that this time Congress will come to realize the dangers of ABM—to say nothing

PETER J. OGNIBENE, *a former Air Force officer, taught in the Department of Political Science at the Air Force Academy.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of its waste of tax dollars—the following is offered as a "Primer" on ABM and its relationship to nuclear strategy.

1. The contention that an ABM system to defend our offensive nuclear missiles will enhance our deterrence posture is unprovable. While it is true that a Safeguard-type of ABM system of *any* effectiveness will be able to stop *some* incoming ICBMs, deterrence will not immediately increase because of a small change on our military balance sheet. Deterrence is fundamentally a psychological phenomenon. That the Soviets have not attacked us—assuming for the moment they have thought of doing so—means that they have been deterred. But why were they deterred? Was it because of their understandable fear of our nuclear arsenal or was it out of love for their fellow inhabitants of Spaceship Earth? While only the most benign of pacifists would be willing to risk that it is the latter, there is no way to prove that it is only the former. The effect can have many causes; hence, giving President Nixon an ABM to chalk up on his scorecard will not add to deterrence with any of the automatism assumed by most ABM advocates.

2. ABM is provocative because it can be interpreted as an initial step toward acquiring an American "splendid first strike" capability. (The term is Herman Kahn's, which is not to imply that he would agree with the analysis.) Much of the momentum for an American ABM system developed because the Russians have some type of missile defense although it is of limited scope and doubtful reliability. In addition, the Defense Department's questionable interpretation of the purpose of existing Soviet ICBMs (notably the SS-9) as first strike, multiple silo-busting weapons was used to shore up the sagging argument for Safeguard. Nonetheless, because Safeguard is designed to diminish Soviet capabilities, it is just as likely to stimulate them to counter it as their ABM and ICBM forces have encouraged some here to advocate ABM or more offensive weapons. The Safeguard system presently contemplated may be limited to protect only part of the Minuteman force, but Soviet strategists are well aware that it is an easier and probably faster step from Safeguard to a national ballistic missile defense system than from zero ABM to Safeguard. Although Safeguard *per se* poses little threat to the USSR missile force, its being a logical first step to full-scale defense makes it provocative in the extreme.

3. The argument that a defensive weapon could not possibly be construed as offensive is a canard. An ABM is as much a counterforce weapon as an ICBM because counterforce is *anything* which either eliminates or reduces the effectiveness of an adversary's weapons. (That may not be the conventional definition of counterforce, but it is the logical one.) An ABM deployment which diminishes the Soviet capability to deliver offensive missiles will be viewed essentially the same by the Soviet Union as a more extensive deployment of American ICBMs because the target in each instance is the Soviet missile. To say that the Safeguard ABM system is a threat only to a Soviet first strike force and poses no threat to her second strike (deterrent) force makes little sense because from a targeting standpoint it is all one strategic nuclear force. Because ABM is the only feasible defense against submarine-launched ballistic

missiles which are the crucial elements of this force, a threat to these elements is certain to stimulate counteraction. (Anti-submarine warfare has not—and is unlikely to—become a serious threat to SLBMs.) Hence, a move by one side which is perceived by the other as advancing beyond what President Nixon has called "nuclear sufficiency" could be the beginning of a new and purposeless arms race. Safeguard is such a move.

4. Arms races are generally undertaken for one of two reasons: you think you can win, or you fear you already are losing. A symmetrical increase in nuclear arms by both sides obviously will not enhance either's security, and it would waste dollars and rubles that could be put to more constructive purposes. The SALT negotiations are evidence that both the United States and the Soviet Union realize this, and much would be gained if both could agree to freeze nuclear arms at present levels. A successful American or Soviet ABM, however, could easily induce the unsuccessful party to deploy more ICBMs, ABMs, or both. The resulting countermoves could intensify the arms race cycle to the ultimate benefit of no one except, perhaps, the arms-makers in both nations.

5. If there were an arms race, ABM would not be the best way, from both a military and a cost-effectiveness standpoint, to counteract a Soviet build-up. Former Secretary of the Air Force Harold Brown was the predecessor of the Pentagon's most vociferous ABM supporter, John S. Foster, who is the present Director of Defense Research and Engineering. Writing in the January 1967 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Dr. Brown said: "Unless the defense is much less expensive than the offense (informed analyses show it to be more expensive), the correct counter to an opponent's ABM deployment is an improved or increased offensive force."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Present scientific evidence—apart from the Pentagon's—bears out Dr. Brown's conclusion. Likewise, the most cost-effective and technically reliable way to counter an adversary's *offensive* force would be an increase in your own offensive delivery capability. This might be accomplished in a number of ways far more likely to succeed than Safeguard. A larger Polaris-Poseidon force, super-hardened silos, multiple warheads, and increased dispersion are a few.

6. The technical reliability of any ABM system cannot be realistically tested, and its effectiveness will be downgraded in the minds of both American and Soviet strategists. Not the least of the ABM's problems is that it requires the communal marriage of radar, computer, missile and warhead. Even should this bizarre ménage succeed, the system could be overwhelmed by such offensive countermeasures as: ICBM saturation, multiple warheads and decoys, or first strikes against the intricately interrelated radar and computer subsystems. The warhead cannot be operationally tested on the missile which will carry it because our signature on the Test Ban Treaty prohibits our conducting nuclear tests anywhere but underground (which even the Pentagon will concede is not the place to intercept an incoming missile). Hence, there will be no way to determine if our ABM system will work should Armageddon be thrust upon us.

(The last four principles in this "Primer" apply, for the most part, to nationwide deployment of an ABM system similar to the now-moribund Sentinel plan. These may help to show the illogic of that type of scheme should there be an attempt to resurrect it.)

7. A nationwide deployment of ABMs to protect us from a third power's attack—Red China—is useless. How far would such a system extend? Would it protect Hawaii or Puerto Rico? If China or another small nuclear power were truly intent upon destroying at least a small part of the United States, do we actually expect them to strike where our defenses are strongest? If our vast nuclear arsenal is not sufficient to deter would-be attackers, then there is no way for us to achieve absolute security. Indeed, if there were serious cause to believe that an irrational leader were actually planning such an attack, we might be morally bound to prevent it. Conceivably, that might require offensive, but certainly not defensive, weapons.

8. A nationwide ABM system as a hedge against an accidental launch of a nuclear missile against the U.S. would greatly increase the danger of nuclear accidents involving one of our own ABMs. Our nuclear-tipped ABMs—the Spartan has a warhead publicly estimated in the megaton class—would have to be prepared for virtually instantaneous launch unlike undersea or hardened ICBMs, which are designed to ride out a first strike. An ABM system of any size—the more missiles, the greater the risk—will significantly increase the danger of a domestic nuclear accident, but by how much no one can calculate. Unfortunately, our record with less time-sensitive nuclear weapons does not make the thought of ready-to-go ABMs particularly comforting.

9. A nationwide ABM system capable of defending us against a nuclear missile attack might actually diminish our deterrence against one. (This seeming paradox has a converse: the theoretically perfect deterrent—the "doomsday machine" popularized in the movie *Doctor Strangelove*—is the worst possible defense.) If one side believes it can successfully defend itself from a missile attack, it will no longer regard nuclear war as the ultimate calamity. Removing too much terror from the so-called balance of terror might only serve to embolden those who had, so far anyway, wielded nuclear weapons only in oratory. Destabilizing an already delicate balance would activate the presently quiescent arms race and increase the danger of preventive or preemptive attacks. These are some of the possibilities which must be considered in making major changes in one's armament *and* disarmament policies. It should be apparent that it is not always possible to pursue deterrence and defense simultaneously. Indeed, increasing one's nuclear defenses may actually increase the likelihood that those defenses will have to be used.

10. Technological improvements in offensive weapons could render ballistic missile defenses obsolete in the near future. One such possibility, well within the state of the art, is the development of missiles with non-ballistic trajectories. The Safeguard ABM can function only against a missile whose trajectory is known. Once the powered flight of a missile has been terminated, the rest of the flight (unpowered) follows a ballistic path that can be calculated to the impact point with mathematical certainty (thanks to Sir Isaac Newton and a few billion dollars worth of telemetry and computers). Spartan or Sprint ABMs are then programmed to intercept the warhead at some point along this known path. If energy is added to the missile in flight, however, its path will deviate from the one calculated, and the ABM will explode harmlessly at its predetermined intercept point on the original path. To date, non-ballistic missiles have not been developed simply because ballistic missiles are effective (no defenses and no extra propellant to diminish the size of the warhead). If the United States were to commit itself to extensive ABM deployment, Soviet strategists would know our future defenses long before they became operational. There would then be an entirely new strategic calculus which could make the development of non-ballistic missiles a feasible—perhaps, necessary—undertaking. The end result, of course, would be no increase in security despite the billions which would have been spent.

The threat posed to mankind by nuclear weapons re-

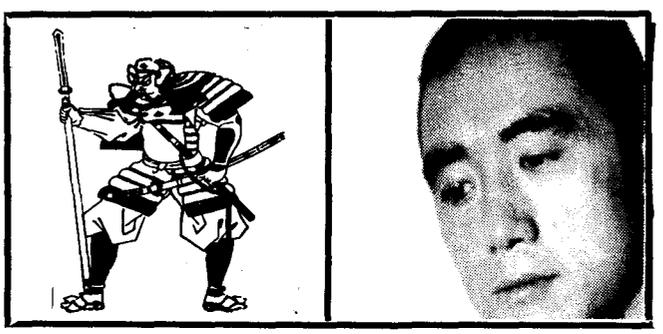
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mains great, but peace and security are not going to result just from building more and better weapons. Placing blind faith in a potential adversary's good will is likewise fraught with danger. If the goal of the Soviet Union is nuclear superiority, she will find it an elusive one. The American response to the supposed missile-gap in the early 1960s should have convinced Soviet decision-makers that they cannot continue (or give the appearance of) building a nuclear first strike capability and expect us to look the other way. On the other hand, if we convince the USSR that she is already in an arms race *and losing,* can we expect her to look the other way?

Nuclear superiority is no longer an attainable or a meaningful strategic position—however potent it may be as a rallying cry for hawks—because each side can deny that goal to the other. The United States and the Soviet Union possess adequate intelligence and the industrial capacity to go tit-for-tat or higher if one side appears to be going beyond the bounds of nuclear sufficiency. Still, both nations have their diehards who have not abandoned dreams of nuclear superiority. (Eisenhower gave them a collective appellation: "the military-industrial complex." Khrushchev, more simply, called them "metal-eaters.")

The slowdown in SS-9 deployment and the Soviet proposal to limit ABM are favorable indications that the Russians are aware of the dangers of another nuclear arms race. Publicly the Nixon Administration has yet to make a reciprocal gesture of good faith. Surely it should not be too difficult for the President to show an eagerness to prepare for peace that matches our ability to make ready for war.

While the hopes of all civilized people are focused on Vienna, this should not prohibit this country from taking unilateral steps to enhance the prospects of worldwide peace and stability. One small step in that direction would be a significant reduction—preferably the elimination—of the Safeguard system. If President Nixon is unwilling to take that step, Congress will undoubtedly have another chance when Mr. Nixon asks for more money for Safeguard or something bigger.



THE POLITICS OF SUICIDE

Yukio Mishima and the spirit of Japan

RICHARD T. HALLORAN

SEVERAL YEARS ago, when the Red Guards were rampaging through the libraries and temples of China, Yukio Mishima and several other Japanese writers called a press conference in Tokyo to register their protest againt the destruction. Mishima and his colleagues, among them Yasunari Kawabata, who was later awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, contended that art and politics should be kept separate and that above all, politics should never be allowed to dominate art. After the press conference, Mishima had a moment to speak with me and I somewhat facetiously asked him: "Mishima-sensei, if you object to political students' meddling in art, how do you justify you and the other artists here becoming involved in a political issue?"

Mishima released a deep, quick laugh that could come only from an intense, tightly wound man when he lets go. After translating the question to the others, he turned and conceded that he saw an apparent contradiction in their position. But he justified the stand that they were taking by saying, in effect, "Art is more important than politics. We, as artists, have a right and an obligation to speak out when art is endangered by politics, no matter where it is."

In a way, Mishima's death by his own hand and sword last November was the utterly logical culmination of a life of art and politics—not the politics of party or elections or powerful office, but the politics of a profound love of country and culture. Mishima's devotion to the culture of his homeland showed through all of his art. He wrote an essay in 1968 entitled "On the Defense of Culture" in which he said that Japanese culture is "a kind of transparent crystal through which the national spirit can be seen." He said that Japanese culture "includes not only works of art but also behavior and the pattern of conduct." Taking the title from Ruth Benedict's wartime study of the Japanese, Mishima said that Japanese culture "includes the chrysanthemum and the sword, ranging from The Tales of Genjí to modern novels, from the 'Mannyoshu' to vanguard 'tanka' poetry, from the images of Buddha in the Chusonji Temple to modern sculpture, from flower arrangement and the tea ceremony to kendo and judo, from Kabuki to gangsters' sword-play movies, and from Zen to soldiers' manners. It is a form through which things Japanese can be seen."

"Japanese culture," Mishima said, "has the peculiar tradition of turning a pattern of action into a work of art. The characteristic of Japan is that its

RICHARD HALLORAN *is the author of* Japan: Images and Realities.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

martial arts belong to the same genre as the tea ceremony and flower arrangement." Bushido, the Way of the Warrior and the code of chivalry, "is a manner of beautifying ethics and ethicising beauty and combines living with art."

Mishima's death by ritual suicide accorded with his concept of the ideals of Japan. To the Western mind, suicide is the coward's way out and slicing open one's belly a particularly grotesque way to leave the world. But it is important to understand that in a Japanese context, suicide and especially the form of suicide that Mishima took has quite another meaning. It is an act of honor, of courage and of self-sacrifice in a nation in which the subordination of oneself to others and to the nation and to the Emperor is a duty of the highest calling. In the old days, ritual suicide was reserved for the samurai who bore two swords, a long blade for their adversaries and a short one for themselves.

I do not pretend, despite some years of having lived among the Japanese and trying hard to understand them, to comprehend the sublime meaning of suicide as they see it. I am as locked into my own cultural thinking as they are in theirs. But perhaps I can offer some clues.

AT the risk of being pedantic, one one must first look at the meaning of the word for ritual suicide to understand the symbolism of the act. Most Westerners refer to it as "harakiri," a word of two ideographs that mean literally "to cut the stomach." The Japanese, however, generally use the word "seppuku," which is composed of the same two ideographs in reverse order. (The reasons for the change in pronunciation are too complicated to explain here and, in any case, are irrelevant.) The important ideograph refers to the stomach and has more than a physiological meaning. It connotes an inner being or the spirit of a man, roughly with the same sense that Americans intend when they use the inelegant term "guts."

Thus, seppuku is the cutting of the spirit or, as one dictionary has it, "the happy dispatch." It is the ultimate protest against that which one cannot accept, the ultimate affirmation of that in which one believes, and the ultimate reconciliation between the two.

In particular circumstances, suicide is a release from shame, which, far more than guilt, moves a Japanese. It can often be a release from conflicting obligations, which, far more than personal rights, dominate the lives of Japanese. Throughout Japanese literature are tales of double suicides by lovers who have pledged themselves to one another but have been honor bound to obey their parent's commands to marry others. Suicide was the only decent way out.

Mishima's seppuku, therefore, was neither immoral nor amoral in the Judeo-Christian sense, but was profoundly ethical in a Japanese sense. It was an act of purification with its genesis in the beliefs of Shinto, the Way of the Gods that is Japan's national (but not state) religion. Above all, it is important to understand that Mishima was not insane, as some would have it. The context of his suicide would indicate that he knew precisely what he was doing and why. Morever, people who knew Mishima and his work well have said they have a wealth of evidence that, with the benefit of hindsight, showed that he planned his seppuku four or five years ago.

No one knows for certain why Mishima committed seppuku. It has been the subject of tremendous speculation in Japan and of considerable analysis outside of Japan. What follows is some personal guesswork based on the evidence seen so far.

Mishima's death was his final battle in the defense of Japanese culture. In his peroration before the hastily assembled soldiers on the grounds of the Eastern District defense headquarters in Tokyo, Mishima pleaded for a rejection of alien traits, especially the materialism of the West, and a return to the best in the traditions of Japan. He railed against the Constitution that was imposed on Japan by the American Occupation nearly 25 years ago and asked that it be replaced with one written by Japanese and drawn from the essence of Japanese cultural thought. He exhorted the soldiers to return to the Way of the Warrior, with its Spartan virtues of resolution, courage, loyalty and sincerity.

But Mishima most assuredly did not, as some have contended, demand a revival of the militarism and chauvinism of the 1930s and 1940s. That was plainly anathema to him. Nor did he ask the soldiers to follow him in a coup, as other reports have held, that would have resembled the famous, or infamous, incident of Feb. 26, 1936, when a band of young ultrarightist officers took over the center of Tokyo.

Some Japanese have found a clue in the date of Mishima's death, Nov. 25. It coincided with the day in 1859 on which a young patriot named Yoshida Shoin was beheaded. He had planned to assassinate an official who proposed to open Japan, then a self-isolated country, to commercial intercourse with the West. Yoshida was discovered and executed but became a hero for his bold spirit. His last poem, written in prison, could easily have been Mishima's final testimony:

"That such an act
Would have such a result
I knew well enough.
What made me do it anyhow
Was the Spirit of Japan."

THE IMMEDIATE impact of Mishima's seppuku stunned the Japanese. Nothing so dramatic as that had happened in many years. The degree of popular interest was perhaps best measured by the run on the bookstores, where every copy of Mishima's works was snapped up, and the temporary doubling and tripling in circulation by any newspaper or periodical containing an article on Mishima. Commentators in Japan and Japanese outside of Japan nervously tried to assure themselves and anyone who would listen that the Mishima affair was not a signal that Japan was about to revive the militarism that was based on a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

distorted version of Bushido in prewar Japan.

General Mashita Kanetoshi, in whose office Mishima had died, resigned in a very Japanese act to take responsibility for the commotion caused by an incident for which he was not responsible. In an earlier day, he might have taken the short sword to himself in atonement. Inoki Masamichi, the newly appointed President of the Defense Academy, where officers of the ground, naval and air services are trained, gave a long address to refute Mishima's contentions about the Constitution and to counter apprehensions that the armed forces intended to resume the role in Japanese society that they played in the 1930s.

It is still too early to gauge the longer-term impact of Mishima's seppuku. It appears to have had little effect on specific political or military policies, and may never have. But it seems to have left its mark on the national mood, which corresponds generally to what Americans call public opinion and is much more significant than the response to a particular policy. The Japanese are an emotional people, all the stereotypes of inscrutability to the contrary, and are often motivated more by their sentiment than their rationality. There are national sentiments in Japan that arise from a homogeneous people living in a tight little island country and governing themselves by a subtle, constantly evolving consensus.

Mishima's seppuku has clearly aroused a national sentiment throughout the country, among the old and the young, and across the political spectrum. What Mishima did was quintessentially Japanese and the Japanese recognize it and take heart in it. His seppuku came in the midst of a national search for identity in which the Japanese are looking into themselves, their history and their culture to discover again who they are. Mishima's memory may well become one of the beacons lighting the way.

The strongest sentiment that is coursing through Japan today is the resurgence of nationalism, which should not be confused with the ultra-nationalism of the 1930s. Rather, it is a renewal of pride in being uniquely Japanese and a revival of confidence in Japanese ways and customs and institutions. Mishima was eminently a man of his times and could well have stimulated the already swift flow of Japanese nationalism.

The new nationalism in Japan seems to be expressing itself in drives for economic and political goals. Already having the third most powerful economy in the world, the Japanese may be pushing to be first. They are coming out of their postwar cocoon to demand what they consider to be their rightful place in the political sun. Japan is gradually building up its military forces but there are no signs that anyone has a desire to roll down the adventurist road of the 1930s.

There are genuine fears among other Asians that Japan may return to imperialism, and there are propagandistic charges against Japanese militarism from the Communist Chinese, but those are more self-serving than factual. A revival of prewar militarism could happen, and Mishima's memory could be distorted to prod it along, but that now seems unlikely.

Mishima's place in the literary history of Japan is assured. He was often mentioned as a candidate for the Nobel Prize, and he could still win it, perhaps. I will venture a guess that Mishima will also have an honored place in the national history as a hero who committed seppuku out of total devotion to Japan. Almost a century ago, a warrior named Saigo Takamori led a rebellion against the newly-established Meiji government because he feared that Japan would be corrupted by the incursion of Western ideas. Saigo died an honorable death in battle, and his cause was lost, but the Japanese, who admire men of dedication, made him a national hero.

It would not be surprising if the Japanese render the same respect to Yukio Mishima.

IMPOSSIBLE BEAUTY

Yukio Mishima, 1927-1970

MICHAEL GALLAGHER

Isao drew in his breath sharply and shut his eyes as he ran his left hand caressingly over his stomach. Grasping his short sword with his right hand, he pressed its point against his body at the spot that his fingers had sought out. Then with a powerful thrust of his arm, he plunged the sword into his stomach. The instant that the blade tore open his flesh, the bright disk of the sun soared up and exploded behind his eyelids.

The conclusion of *Honba*, the second novel of Mishima's tetralogy *The Sea of Fertility*.

I am so stunned I hardly know what to say. . . . I think that he died a martyr to his own concept of beauty, and I feel that this final act brought Mishima's conduct into perfect harmony with his ideals. His death was heroic and pure.

The Catholic novelist Shusaku Endo writing in the *Asahi* the day of Mishima's suicide.

YUKIO MISHIMA was a godsend to the foreign journalists stationed in Tokyo. As colorful, frenetic and occasionally outrageous as modern Japan may be, newspapermen stationed there are nonetheless at a disadvantage in competing for space with their colleagues in other sections of the world. For it is still personalities that make the best copy, and Japanese society is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

notably lacking in authentically independent spirits.

But there was always the virile and brilliant, the irrepressible Mishima to write about. Or at least there was until shortly after noon on a day last November when the sky over Tokyo was blue and free of smog for the first time in weeks. For it was then that one of the most celebrated writers that Japan has ever produced stripped off the military tunic that he had himself designed, sat down upon the floor of the Western-style office of the commandant of the Ichigaya headquarters of the Self-Defense Forces, took the position traditionally prescribed for *seppuku*, and, apparently intent upon achieving a fame more secure than mere literature could gain for him tore open his stomach with a short sword to take his place in Japanese history beside the legendary Forty-Seven Loyal Ronin, whose graves in Tokyo have become a national shrine.

Such was the flamboyant perfection of Mishima's final act that it surpassed everything he had done before in gaining the attention of the world press. The foreign journalists, even while they were forced to speculate uneasily about the desperate passion that had driven him to it, were given a superb but final opportunity to once more make much of his dazzling contradictions before they had to surrender him once and for all to the drab little band of Japanese specialists, the scholars and the translators, whose quotient of passion perhaps falls even further short of Mishima's than their own. But for those of both groups who knew him well enough to be aware of his kindness and his boyish zest, the lack of affectation that lay deeper than his theatricality, the sense of humor that he was quite capable of directing at himself, Mishima's death has provoked a keen sense of loss. For them a significant measure of warmth and color has gone out of not only the Japanese scene but life itself.

In a letter of last August, he told me in his occasionally awkward but always vigorous English that he was "occupied, rather possessed" with the concluding novel of his tetralogy *The Sea of Fertility*, whose final installment was to reach his publisher the day of his death. His choice of words was apt since nothing that Mishima took up merely occupied him but had to possess him. To call Mishima obsessed, however, is not to explain the man. I think that the novelist Endo came closest to specifying the terrible force that drove Mishima to his shocking and incredible end in Ichigaya when he wrote that he thought he died "for the sake of his own concept of beauty."

FOR ALL the talk about the differences between the Eastern and Western sensibilities, precious little has been written on this topic that can bear hard scrutiny. And even the fairly restrained and sound generalizations that might apply to the rest of Asia vis-à-vis Europe and America have considerable less validity when one tries to apply them to hustling, industrialized Japan. An anecdote from the war in Vietnam, however, well illustrates, I think, one fundamental difference that sets Asia, including Japan, apart from the West, especially from America. Some years ago, an American officer remarked to a Korean officer serving with the Korean division in Vietnam that he could not understand how the Vietcong could continue the struggle much longer since they were suffering such high casualities. Surely, he said, the war would soon end. The Korean however, shook his head. No, he said. The Vietcong would go on dying, and the war would drag on for years. And to the American's protest of disbelief, he replied: "They'll go on dying because they feel they must. After all, they never expected happiness from life. Vietnamese don't expect to be happy. Koreans don't either. Only Americans expect to be happy."

The years that have passed since that conversation have perhaps educated Americans in this regard, one sign of which may be the replacement of the contrived happy endings of our films of the forties and fifties with the somewhat less contrived unhappy endings of today. But if the naive hope that everything will turn out just fine, a vulgarized remnant of Christianity, has been torn from us by the Vietnam war and the other familiar catastrophes of the last decade I wonder if anything approaching real wisdom will replace it.

The Japanese on the other hand have long lived with catastrophe with not even a debased Christian hope to offer them solace. And so with the very concept of happiness foreign to them, they have developed a taste for a particular kind of beauty, the sort of brief beauty so fragile and evanescent that it is beyond the ravages of time and decay: the blooming and scattering of the cherry blossoms, the spring mist rising from a lake, the light of fireflies, the parting of lovers, the death of a brave and handsome young samurai. The Christian Tennyson might insist in *In Memoriam* that nothing beautiful is lost forever, and Mishima himself might use the orthodox Buddhist doctrine of reincarnation for purposes of literary unity in his last work, but the Japanese mood, as well as Mishima's own, I believe, is dominated by that element of Buddhism that from the beginning proved most congenial to it: *mujo*, no stability, the explicit theme of the *Heike Monogatari*, the great Japanese epic dealing with the struggle between the two warrior families of Taira and Minamoto in the 12th century. Permanence, then, is not to be sought in beauty. On the contrary, the highest form of beauty is that uncontaminated by any quasi-permanence, the sort of beauty that is manifested and consummated at nearly the same moment.

The two young heroes of *Spring Snow* and *Honba*, the first two novels of *The Sea of Fertility*, both die before they are 20, and as different as their characters are, they are alike in the extravagant and single-minded passion with which they follow their impossible ideals to the end. Kiyoaki, of *Spring Snow*, much like the young Mishima

---

MICHAEL GALLAGHER *is the translator of Mishima's final work,* The Sea of Fertility, *the first volume of which,* Spring Snow, *will be published by Knopf this summer.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

himself, is sensitive and delicate. He is a student at the aristocratic Peers' College a few years after the Russo-Japanese War, and he detests the school's chauvinistic and rough, masculine atmosphere. The fierce cries of the boys of the kendo team striking at one another with their bamboo swords is an object of particular loathing for him.

Kiyoaki's father is a marquis, but of the new, upstart peerage. The family, then, are not natural aristocrats but of sturdy samurai stock. Kiyoaki's penchant for sentiment and beauty, however, which would have been severely handled had he been born a generation earlier, has been allowed to flourish because he had been raised in the household of Count Ayakura, an aristocrat of the ancient court nobility placed there by his rough and boorish father, who wanted his son to imbibe the sense of elegance that characterized such an atmosphere. Kiyoaki had done so all too well.

The elegance that has captured Kiyoaki is a serene beauty, impervious to the vicissitudes of ordinary life, a beauty that is only briefly glimpsed and impossible to attain. A beauty, finally, that has its own categorical imperative: it demands everything and knows nothing of the limits imposed by any morality whatsoever.

One evening at Mishima's home in Tokyo about a year and a half ago, shortly after I had begun my translation of *Spring Snow*, I read to him my English version of the passage that depicts Kiyoaki's first perception of the erotic cast of this kind of elegance. Kiyoaki at 13 serves as a page bearing the train of the beautiful Princess Kasuga at a function at the Imperial Palace. He is altogether taken with the creamy whiteness of the nape of the princess' neck:

> The vision of dazzling whiteness that so held him seemed to be ever on the verge of eluding him, like a snow-covered peak whose pure brilliance is now obscured, now revealed by swirling clouds. For the first time in his life, he felt the full effect of womanly beauty, a burst of elegance that made his senses reel.

In the version that I read to Mishima that night I had not translated the word *yuga* as elegance, inhibited as I was by the reluctance with which we Americans use such words, but had down-graded the noun to an adjective and translated it as *refined*. As soon as I had finished, Mishima wanted to know what had become of *elegance*, the word that he had been anxiously listening for. I assured him that from now on I would translate *yuga* as elegance. Even without his admonition, however, I would have realized my error and put aside my un-Mishimalike moderation once I had progressed further into the novel and found the word again and again in a context of special emphasis.

IN *SPRING SNOW*, Count Ayakura's daughter, Satoko, replaces Princess Kasuga as the personification of Kiyoaki's ideal of elegance but only after she becomes the betrothed of an imperial prince and the consequent note of *utter impossibility* at last makes her beauty irresistible to Kiyoaki, even

though for other men Satoko is no more beautiful now than when she was free to marry Kiyoaki and indeed desperately wanted to. But Kiyoaki, like his creator, is not concerned with a life of ordinary happiness but with a beauty that is not only unattainable but demands that everything be hazarded in the attempt to attain it.

Isao of *Honba*, a novel set in the early '30s, some twenty years after *Spring Snow*, would seem at first to be diametrically opposed to Kiyoaki. Isao is vigorously athletic and politically committed and, furthermore, is a champion kendoist. In a recent essay on his own late development as an athlete, Mishima wrote: "My greatest distaste (as a schoolboy) was directed at Kendo and the loud shouting that belonged to it. I felt a hot flush of mortification whenever I heard those rude barbaric cries. . . . Never did I dream for a moment that I might one day voice such a cry." Thirty years later, however, he felt otherwise:

> As I see it, this sound is the cry of Nippon itself buried deep within me, a circumstance which I have at last recognized and behaved accordingly. It is a cry that present-day Nippon is ashamed of and desperately tries to suppress, but it breaks out shattering all pretense. It is something bound up with memories that are dark, something that recalls the flow of newshed blood. But whatever the recollections it provokes, they are ones that most truthfully recall our nation's past. It is the cry of our race bursting through the shell of modernization. This ghost of Nippon Past has long been confined in chains, denied sustenance, and so reduced to uttering weak groans. But in the kendo drill halls, we lend it our throats to come alive, giving it its chance to break free. . . . . I am however aware that the joy that comes of incarnating the force behind these cries is a happiness fraught with danger.

But despite the grim, purposeful tone of these words, is the mature Mishima really so different from the boyish Mishima and is Isao so different from Kiyoaki? A bit further on in the same essay Mishima protests that "I hope that kendo never becomes the international sport redolent of good fellowship that judo has. I never want it to lose the quality that sets it against the spirit of the modern age," and here is a clue to the essential similarity that links the dreamy Kiyoaki, who affronts the honor of the Emperor by defiling the betrothed of an imperial prince, and the rightist activist Isao, who is determined to die if he can take with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him those corrupt Westernizers who insult the Emperor and the gods of Japan. For if an ideal was to arouse Mishima's devotion, it had to offer him a tremendous challenge. And if the challenge was an impossible one, the ideal seemed to become all the more attractive to him. Thus Kiyoaki dies for the sake of a beauty that he knows is utterly beyond his grasp. Isao dies for a cause that he is certain all his comrades have betrayed. And Mishima himself dies for the sake of "Nippon Past" knowing full well that he can never prevail against "the spirit of the modern age."

THE IRONY, of course, is that Yukio Mishima had long prospered by going along with the spirit of the modern age And in so doing he had probably attained again and again that kind of beauty that seems altogether unattainable to an adolescent, and in being attained it had probably lost all of its charm for him. Eminently successful as he was, it was no easy matter for the mature Mishima to find the kind of beauty that offered the challenge of "utter impossibility."

Thus the urbane, individualistic Mishima, a thoroughly modern man who could not have possibly realized his genius as well in any period of the Japanese past, came to idealize that past and so set himself against "the spirit of the modern age," the only challenge that seemed left to him in a land where his literary works were venerated rather than subjected to the kind of critical scrutiny that an American writer of similar stature would have had to contend with. Not that there was not ample intrinsic reason for Mishima to detest the climate of modern Japan, and one need not share his outlook to be troubled by the soulless materialism that threatens to engulf Japan and to replace the samurai with the *pureiboi* transistor salesman as the ideal of Japanese manhood.

And then there was the external pressure from which even Mishima was not immune. He must have realized that no one took him seriously except as a writer. Endo's observation that "I feel that this final act brought Mishima's conduct into perfect harmony with his ideals," though obviously in praise of the dead Mishima, implies a criticism of the living Mishima which expresses a sentiment shared by most Japanese. Everyone, of course, was capable of the arithmetic that showed that Mishima was 19 in 1945, no younger than many of the *kamikaze* pilots. His samurai posturing was evaluated as being on a par with his love of acting in gangster movies. And even his paramilitary Shield Society was looked upon as nothing but another theatrical venture.

Some five years ago in a Tokyo theater I saw Mishima's film *Patriotism* in which he plays the role of a young army officer who commits *seppuku* after an unsuccessful coup. When the credits came on and the audience was duly informed that the author of the original story, the author of the screen play, the director, and the star were all one and the same Yukio Mishima, it was too much for them, and, though Japanese audiences are by no means noted for uncalled-for bursts of hilarity, everyone broke into moderate but genuine laughter. A cartoon of the same period depicted Mishima cutting himself open with one hand and gathering in money with the other.

Then I remember my own reaction that night at Mishima's home when I made the obvious enough observation that Isao reminded me of the 17-year-old boy, Yamaguchi, who some years before had assassinated Asanuma, the Socialist deputy, with a samurai sword and then hanged himself in his cell. Mishima nodded his head and said that he admired the boy, especially since he had killed himself afterwards and so demonstrated his 'sincerity.' On hearing this, I confess that I could not suppress a tinge of irritation: Mishima, rich and famous, living in comfort, professing ideals that he seemed content to let others die for.

There is a character in *The Sea of Fertility* named Honda, Kiyoaki's only friend in *Spring Snow*, a young man intent on becoming a judge and determined to go through life guided by prudent reason. He advises Kiyoaki against initiating his hopeless love affair with Satoko. Later, in *Honba*, when he has achieved his goal and is a judge, he advises Isao to moderate his rash enthusiasm for tradition. Honda, in a word, is a survivor, but a survivor who, deep in his heart envies those who have the courage and passion to risk all and perish. I told Mishima that I found Honda rather fascinating and even without the grace of hindsight, I would always remember Mishima's reaction as being significant. He seemed almost embarrassed as he laughed and said that I surely could not have found much to interest me in someone like Honda.

Honda, of course, represented a side of his creator as surely as did Isao and Kiyoaki, a side which, as far as behavior went, seemed to dominate Mishima, enabling him to survive and to prosper.

But all the time there was the challenge of that impossible beauty that in different forms drove both Kiyoaki and Isao to their deaths. A lesser man, or, if you like a better balanced man, a Honda, in other words, would have shrunk back in proper dread. But not Mishima. At the age of 30 when most men are turning their back on athletics, he started a painful process of conditioning that transformed him from a physical weakling to a healthy well-muscled man, whose body was subservient to his will. In view of what happened, it is hard not to think that this was the first step along the road that ended at Ichigaya last November. When he plunged his sword into his stomach and tore open his flesh, Mishima, according to the commandant who witnessed the act, uttered a loud cry. For Yukio Mishima this was the cry of Nippon Past, the ideal of impossible beauty for which he had chosen to given up everything. Incarnating the force behind that cry had, indeed, as he had prophesied, proved dangerous for him.

I suppose that *Patriotism* must be showing again in the theaters of Tokyo. Whatever those who go to see it think of Yukio Mishima's suicide and its consequences, I am sure that this time when the credits are flashed no one laughs.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SCREEN

Love Story would be a good thing to give up for Lent, or any other occasion. Unfortunately, it's too late for me to enjoy this particular form of deprivation. Seeing *Love Story* has enabled me to understand how it felt to be the monk who, having given up meat for Lent, yielded to temptation only once—on Good Friday. Having resolved not to darken *Love Story's* door, I too broke my fast, on the same day I was to see Peter Brook's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The Brook-Shakespeare play, being a great romance, made it doubly obvious, and doubly painful, that the Hiller-Segal movie is an awful one.

But I'll resist the further temptation to use Shakespeare for clobbering *Love Story*. It's like trying to kill a fly with a cannon: you fear you might miss from the sheer disproportion of weapon and victim. And besides, *Love Story* is perfectly capable of falling apart unassisted. The romance is too pale, too unoriginal to stand on its own. The movie's only cleverness is to second-guess the social aspirations and current hopes against hope of so many Americans. Erich Segal hasn't created this romance with its Harvard setting and WASP hero. He's stolen it from his audience's own maiden daydreams. No one really has to go to a movie to be entertained by what *Love Story* has to offer.

The discouraging word usually said about *Love Story* is that it's a '50s movie—that Jenny (Ali MacGraw) and Oliver (Ryan O'Neal) are '50s stereotypes, and that the movie proves the imagination of millions of Americans still clings to the fifties. But that isn't the case. We have the expert testimony on this of the '50s' leading artifact, Richard M. Nixon. Although he liked *Love Story,* he made one thing perfectly clear: no girl he ever knew said "bull----" to little children, as Jenny does. We mustn't forget that Erich Segal is also the guy who wrote that most modest of mod films, *The Yellow Submarine*. Indeed, Oliver's father in *Love Story* is a Blue-blooded Meany who would fit right into the earlier script.

Love Story isn't far enough behind the times to be a '50s movie. It's only slightly behind the times. My innate sense of these things tells me that *Love Story* has a mental age between 1962 and 1965: its concessions to Con III fall somewhere in that historical range. The tip-off is in the little touches, like Oliver's car, which is an MG-TD. It was never what the salesman would have called a revolutionary car, even when it was new. But it's still not old enough to be classic, or even scarce. It's a car that has some personality, but is comfortably betwixt and between all extreme distinctions. It's both fish and fowl, as Oliver and Jenny are intended to be.

In and of themselves such characters are not the stuff of which Big Bofo dreams are made, as *Variety* would say. Since *Love Story* is therefore unable to succeed as pure romance, it must kill off its heroine to hold our attention. The purpose of Jenny's death is to make us take the whole confection more seriously than we otherwise would, or should. The ending coerces us to believe in a story we would not otherwise bother to sit through. This is very anti-romantic, but effective.

In a good romance (such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), catastrophe threatens the characters without ultimately occurring. In *Love Story* catastrophe occurs without having threatened. The threat of Jenny's death doesn't hang over her and Oliver, for neither of them know it will happen, at least not until it's too late for them to be changed by it or live any differently than they have been. But we are forewarned at the beginning of the film, and the ending is thus given a retroactive influence on our response to their story. Pretty and talented girls—girls with "everything to live for"—*do* die of leukemia. Anyone can die of leukemia. Once we accept that premise, we are ready to entertain the possibility that anyone, even you and I, might also have all the other advantages Jenny and Oliver enjoy. If they can be as vulnerable as we are, we could be as successful and strong as they are. This kind of assurance can apparently be sold to lots of people at $3 a head. It renews the emotional charge of a tired romance. The movie joins wealth and status to ethnic background; it marries privilege to making it on your own. We gave our blessing to this marriage a few years ago, when another Harvard graduate, who was President, also died an untimely death. *Love Story* is just a parasite probing for new life in that old pipe dream.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

BIRON WALKER

NO EASY REACH

Out at the end
of that thin skyward limb

no easy reach

glows
one
last
sun-sweet fruit
the hired pickers would not risk.

I ask
of you

take the trouble to.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS

Is criminal justice a cop-out on justice itself?

Crime in America

RAMSEY CLARK

Simon & Schuster, $6.95

ISIDORE SILVER

As this review is being written, a six-day strike by the New York City police force has just concluded. Among the observable effects of this phenomenon was the fact that most New Yorkers didn't realize that much had changed. Although there may be numerous explanations of just why the crime rate did not soar—*e.g.* the weather was cold, most "street" crime actually occurs indoors where police power is particularly ineffective—one may conclude that the police have little to do with crime. Just as New Yorkers discovered that they really didn't need taxis during that recent work stoppage, so they may have gradually discerned that the police may be a social luxury, not a public necessity. They may then have wondered whether the "criminal justice system" in toto has anything to do with "crime." Strangely enough, anyone arguing this obviously absurd thesis will find some evidence of its validity in Ramsey Clark's tome.

In this perspective, the book is obviously mislabelled; it is not a study of "crime" but rather of how our criminal justice system reacts to some—and only some—criminal incidents. For instance, we can postulate that the first function of such a system is to identify offenders; that function, generally performed by the police, is virtually nonexistent. Indeed, as Clark affirms, the system is incapable of even identifying crimes. "Perhaps 90 percent of all property crime is not reported." Since "property crime" involves approximately 95% of *all* crime, we can note that a substantial portion of the activity labelled criminal by the system is totally unknown to it.

As Clark and virtually all commentators have often noted, the primary function of the policeman is not to apprehend offenders or investigate crimes but to provide certain community services not obtainable elsewhere. Another factor limiting police involvement in criminal activity is the necessity for the department as a bureaucracy to create and to serve its own organizational ends. Between community service and purely administrative activity (as well as sheer boredom), it is doubtful that more than 20%—some estimates are much lower—of the entire time of any given urban police department is devoted to "fighting crime." Thus, at best most of our Nation has a part-time police force dealing with a random and distinctly minimal segment of criminal activity.

Of course, the incidence of criminal activity is—or is thought to be—affected by certain police tactics such as "saturation" deployment into high crime areas. Although crime may—and only that—decrease for a while in that area, it may well shift into adjacent (or even distant) ones. Although it may be socially valuable to argue that the presence of law enforcement prevents crime, it may simply not be true. If the equation is complicated by the factor that, in many large cities, an estimated 50% of all street crime is committed by drug addicts, then the statement cannot be valid at all.

Once crime itself is identified, then the police are mandated to tentatively identify the offender. Clark's statistics on murder, the most frequently reported and intensely investigated of all crime, are both enlightening and chilling. Of the approximately 8,000 homicides committed in the United States each year, 86% lead to arrests, 64% of those arrested are prosecuted, and 43% of those prosecuted are convicted (of something). Even Clark's conclusion that "fewer than one in four . . . results in a conviction" (my arithmetic is slightly more optimistic—32% are convicted of something, 26% of murder) must be qualified by our recently acquired knowledge that many "accidents" (perhaps 10% of all automobile deaths) are in truth homicides. The spiral of crime solution descends rapidly, after murder, and Clark depressingly recapitulates the 1967 finding of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice that the chances of conviction for a serious crime in America are one in fifty.

The dismal statistics about crime and criminal justice continue through all stages of the process. Because they are overworked, prosecutors often drop cases they should not (there is no systematic study of what kinds of cases are involved, and why the particular choices are made) and courts, which are supposed to adjudicate the factual guilt of those charged and prosecuted, for reasons which have become glaringly evident, also fail miserably. Thus, the "criminal justice system" operates primarily as a device to informally punish individuals, prior to any judicial determination of guilt, by bringing them into harsh contact with various law enforcement agencies (and by endorsing outrageous bail practices). Only the hardy—or the luckless—few are around for a final determination of guilt, and most of those are encouraged to plead guilty and not to burden the state with trials. Having pled guilty, they are generally released on probation—and so the "system" is dedicated to losing most of its "clientele" as quickly as possible. A "health care" system which did the same thing would be justly criticized for its inefficiency. In perspective, it is as if all concerned tacitly agreed that the "system" is an evil in itself and one which should enmesh as few as possible. A skeptic might conclude that "criminal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

justice" is only minimally concerned with "criminal" conduct and only accidentally involved with "Justice."

Society reserves its greatest sanction for the final stage of that system—incarceration. Clark may be exaggerating only slightly when he says, "The history of penology is the saddest chapter in the history of civilization." Although he does not explicitly call for the abolition of these hideous institutions, he argues that numerous alternatives are preferable. He doubtlessly expects that, once these alternatives (half-way houses, community treatment centers) are fully and fairly tested, our correctional institutions will wither away. One can only say "Amen."

At every level, one inevitably concludes, the "system" is a failure; by every definition, it does not perform its ostensible functions. There are many areas within our urban centers where it does not even pretend to exist. In short, it has little to do with either crime or Justice, or, indeed, with our daily lives. Its random selection of individuals to deal with has no demonstrable effect (except perhaps negative) upon the incidence of total crime in the society and often only a demeaning and destructive effect upon the lives of those caught in its fumbling, arbitrary, and often cruel clutches.

Clark, having alerted the reader (valuably) to the manifest failures alluded to above, can only call for reform. To the question whether reform is possible, given our assumptions about "crime," he can only fleetingly ruminate upon our national unconcern—save the rhetoric—about it. He laments that "Crime reflects the character of a people" and, indeed, "the character of the entire society." "We are cruelly afflicted with crime because we have failed to care for ourselves and for our character." Brave words, harsh words, bitter words—but what do they mean? Clark never tells us. He deems the truth of these doleful assertions to be so self-evident that no explanation is necessary. Yet, any serious book about "crime" must tell us more; it cannot merely consist of "Observations Upon [the] Nature, Causes, Prevention and Control" of crime, as casually announced by the sub-title. There is a sense—and it is difficult to use the term about a man so evidently humane and decent—of "cop out" about that very casualness. If "Crime" is characterological, then how does a Nation change its "character" to sanction the changes argued for by Clark? If the system is a glaring failure, then maybe hortatory rhetoric such as "Healthy people in a just and concerned society will not commit significant crime"—whatever that means—is irrelevant.

Can we sensibly apprehend the meaning of statements such as

> Social stability cannot be attained until we so simplify the complexities of our lives that the individual can see some sense of order and proportion in Society

and

> Old instincts must be altered. Our reflex to violence can be conditioned out of the American character. We should work to make violence socially unacceptable and personally unthinkable.

and can we act on those statements? Of course, a corollary question is: *Should* we act to "alter our instincts" and to "simplify the complexities," at least without something more than "Observations" to guide us? Indeed, if our national character is so deficient, or perverted, should we even try to alter instincts or engage in widespread scientific experimentation? Why must "our" "old instincts" be altered? Do Americans have those "extra glands" that Jack Valenti was so wont to ascribe to Lyndon Johnson? If not, then maybe what is different about America is its national experience, not its "character" —and maybe the rest of the world is beginning to catch up to that experience.

At times, Clark talks as if our post-modern society can be readily molded to fit the assumptions of a pre-industrial order. He honestly believes that we can return to a world where "deterrence" of crime can occur and where there is meaning in the classical statement that "An effectively functioning criminal justice system" rather than "the fear of severe punishment" does, in fact, deter crime. In short, Clark is a classical utilitarian in modern dress—as well as a not untypical American optimist (as well as profound pessimist, the opposite side of our national philosophical schizophrenia). To him, the great American virtues, Will and Hard Work, will solve our problems, even our characterological ones. Where they cannot, apparently a humanized technology and science will do so. While one cannot but wish that such were true, or potentially true, the suspicion that questions of "Character," "Technology" and "Social Change" cannot be so readily disposed of still lingers. Perhaps we can "observe" that traditional concepts of "crime" may be woefully inappropriate for a society hurtling into an unknown future. Can such a society establish or maintain a Moral Order, the heart of Clark's diagnosis? The very concepts of "crime" and "criminal justice" presuppose a human condition of individual freedom and personal choice. If the social and economic bases of such human condition have profoundly changed, then so inevitably must our perceptions about the continued viability of both criminal law and criminal justice. Most of all, if the "American Character"—as undefined by Clark—has contributed to the breakdown of the Moral Order—assuming one ever existed—then a return to Optimism and Utilitarianism is surely inadequate.

The crucial questions are whether a modern society can depend upon a criminal justice system—even a perfect one—to maintain a viable Social and Moral Order, whether the very concept of "criminal justice" (and how that term grates upon the ear) is meaningful, and whether we have the knowledge and means to find creative alternatives to *any* criminal justice system. Would Clark's estimable—and often courageous, though traditional—reforms really "create a wholesome environment" and eliminate or significantly reduce what we choose to call "crime"? Do all societies need a concept of "crime" to define themselves, and can modern societies afford such a concept? We—and I include myself as well as Mr. Clark—being good Americans, do not

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

often choose to face those questions. We, liberal and conservative alike, cannot be but losers because of such failure.

The Church As Moral Decision Maker

JAMES M. GUSTAFSON

Pilgrim Press, $5.95

CHARLES E. CURRAN

This slim volume gathers together eight previously published essays by James M. Gustafson which are now grouped together around the two general themes of the church in society and moral perspectives on the church.

The subject matter of the essays is somewhat dated; for example, the first essay on Christian attitudes towards a technological society originally appeared over ten years ago. Since then there has been much theological discussion about technology and secularity. Likewise the essays on the church do not propose any radical new types of church community but rather assume that churches will continue to exist in the future much the same as they were a few years ago. One would never come away from reading this book with the impression that the church is experiencing any real crisis today.

This book does not attempt to suggest radical reforms in the church. No one would ever include these essays in any "futuristic symposium" on the church in the next century or even the church in the '70s. There are no sweeping criticisms of the present and no prophetic blueprints for the future, but this book does make a significant contribution to the discussion, if only to remind us of the continuing need for careful analysis in our discourse about the church and society.

In these essays Gustafson carefully pursues his critical analysis of the church as a voluntary association and of the society in which we live. The scholarly, analytical and unsensational approach so well illustrated in Gustafson's methodology must always be present in our theologizing about the church and society. Although such an approach appears to be dull and unexciting in comparison with other approaches to the same subject, often its value is more lasting.

An opening introduction by Charles M. Swezey, who assembled the collection of essays, sketches the later development of Gustafson's moral methodology and tries to relate these earlier essays to this methodology. Gustafson views the technological society in all its ambiguities which excludes canonizing technology as totally good or rejecting it as the product of evil. Perhaps Gustafson sees the ambiguity of technology too much in terms of a division between the inner and the outer in man so that technology is seen as a product of rationality and thus is somewhat opposed to the human.

A careful analysis of Christian social action examines the forms of such action under three different perspectives—as governed by the social structure itself, by personal faith, and by God's objective action. The essay on "Authority in a Pluralistic Society" starts from a sociological analysis of the pluralistic society to determine the role and function of authority. Perhaps the contemporary experience would move the author to change his emphasis on the civil law as providing "the clearest statement of the social and cultural consensus present in a pluralistic society. . . ."

The essays in Part Two emphasize the reality of the church as a voluntary association which as one of its purposes must become a community of moral discourse and then properly use its institutional power. Gustafson and others have seen the voluntary association as the model of the Protestant church in this country, but contemporary Roman Catholic ecclesiology understands the church in a very similar way. In the future, for example, the magisterial function in the Roman Catholic church should be exercised more in accord with the model of a community of moral discourse as sketched by Gustafson.

In these essays Gustafson alludes to two important moral themes which still interest him today—the model of responsibility and the concern of moral education and development. Gustafson examines the moral purposes and functions of the church and the best way to implement these. He often succinctly reviews past theological approaches and then carefully indicates guidelines

REVIEWERS

ISIDORE SILVER is Chairman of the Department of Government and Economics at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York.

FATHER CHARLES E. CURRAN's most recent book is *Contemporary Problems in Moral Theology* (Fides).

DID YOU KNOW?

YOU WILL DO MORE WORTHWHILE READING MORE OFTEN WITH MAGAZINES?

IT'S A FACT. Because you will pick up magazines more easily than a book, and yet properly expect more than the surface events of a newspaper.

NOW new Catholic magazines offer the most professional package in our Church history.

UNIFIED MAGAZINE PROGRAM offers 15 top Catholic magazines as a parish rack service—and parish pays only for copies actually sold.

NO RISK. And parishioners will do more worthwhile reading more often . . . with magazines.

AMERICA, CRITIC, COMMONWEAL, CATHOLIC DIGEST, THE LAMP, CATHOLIC WORLD, SIGN, LIGUORIAN, OUR SUNDAY VISITOR, TODAY'S FAMILY DIGEST, TRIUMPH, TODAY, ST. ANTHONY MESSENGER, MARRIAGE, U.S. CATHOLIC/JUBILEE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION WRITE:

UNIFIED MAGAZINE PROGRAM
400 Sette Drive
Paramus, New Jersey 07652

4

Please send more information, without obligation, on the Unified Magazine Program.

Name .....

Church .....

City ..... State ..... Zip .....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and directions which the church should follow without presenting any detailed and concrete plan. As a good academician he tries to move the question forward step by step.

In sum, the impact of these essays suffers from the changes which have occurred in the church and society in the last few years. Gustafson stresses the need for the church to be a community of moral discourse, but moral discourse in the church needs a plurality of forms including a more prophetic dimension than is apparent in this volume. The church, however, needs today and always will need and profit from the type of careful, reflective, analytic moral discourse which Gustafson handles so well.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 27)

children. That will not be easy but there is no reason to believe that it is impossible.

JOSEPH B. ROBISON
Director, Commission on Law
and Social Action
American Jewish Congress

Cambridge, Mass.

To the Editors: Although Maurice Berube's discussion of educational vouchers [Jan. 29] contains a number of interesting insights, his intellectual and political history of the idea is almost completely fanciful. His article suggests that:

1. The idea of educational vouchers was concocted by theorists such as Milton Friedman and myself and "sold" to OEO despite parental indifference to the plan.

2. The idea is now being sold to school districts by a bundle of political innocents who expected the NEA and AFT to greet the idea with enthusiasm.

3. One major advocate of the plan, namely myself, is not only politically innocent but reactionary, in that I oppose community control and believe the poor to be uneducable.

I am not sure where Berube got these ideas, but they are wrong. I must also note with some pique that Mr. Berube could easily have gotten the facts right by talking to me or, in the case of the first two propositions, anyone else associated with the project. Since he did not do this, let me try to set the record straight.

(1) Readers of *Commonweal* hardly need to be told that voucher systems have won substantial support from Catholic parents in many areas. Several state legislatures have come very close to establishing statewide voucher systems. I can assure Mr. Berube that these legislatures were responding to popular pressure, not to articles by Milton Friedman or myself, and not to OEO interest in the idea.

When the Nixon Administration took power in 1969, a number of liberal Republicans and holdover Democrats became interested in the possible use of voucher systems for subsidizing all sorts of services, from job training to housing. The theory was that vouchers might make schools (and other public services) more "accountable" to their clients. Accountability was and is a magic word in Washington. So far as I can tell, this interest was in no way inspired by the writing of Milton Friedman, myself, or any other educational critic. At the time OEO asked me and several colleagues if we would work on the development of a voucher system, nobody in the agency seemed to be aware that either I or anyone else had already written on the subject.

Having watched the development of a middle-class political constituency for vouchers, my colleagues and I were worried about their likely effects, especially on economic and racial segregation. We agreed to work on the development of an alternative approach to vouchers largely because we thought that if alternative approaches were not worked out, many states might adopt voucher systems of quite undesirable kinds.

When Mr. Berube says in a Catholic magazine that vouchers were "sold" to OEO without so much as a whisper of support from parents throughout the country, one suspects him of writing tongue-in-cheek. But what he really means is that OEO became interested even though there was little articulate support from *black* parents. This reflects three facts. First, most statewide voucher proposals provide such small payments that a family would only be able to take advantage of them if it had substantial additional resources of its own or if it wanted to use a low-cost Catholic school. Such schemes are of little value to blacks, and have been rightly viewed with suspicion by black leaders. Second, vouchers have a bad history of being used to maintain segregation in the South. Third, black parents have never had any experience with vouchers, and have no reason to trust either educational theorists like myself or federal bureaucrats in OEO who say vouchers may solve their problems.

Given black apathy, I gather that Mr. Berube thinks political sophisticates should not become involved at all. This would, however, leave the field to those whose main interest in vouchers is either to set up racially segregated private schools or to keep the parochial schools alive. My colleagues and I thought it wiser to encourage OEO to establish a demonstration project whose ground rules would give black parents a fair shake. If this were done, black leaders would be able to decide for themselves whether vouchers offered more or less hope of achieving their goals than, say, community control. Without such a demonstration, the field will continue to be monopolized by theory and rhetoric.

(2) Contrary to what Mr. Berube supposes, my colleagues and I did not expect the NEA and AFT to greet our labors with enthusiasm. As Mr. Berube could have discovered by a little inquiry, we told OEO to prepare for strong opposition. Indeed, when we embarked on the project, we told OEO there was little chance of finding a single school board or superintendent interested in hosting a demonstration. As our work progressed, however, we were surprised to find many superintendents who were much more open to the idea than we had anticipated.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The "establishment," it seems, is neither as monolithic nor as traditional as critics sometimes assume.

Mr. Berube also quotes me as saying that neither I nor OEO wanted "another Ocean Hill." He seems to suppose that this reflected a distaste for "militants" and a disbelief in the necessity of conflict. Again, he is wrong. What I meant was simply that neither I nor OEO wanted to see a voucher experiment started under circumstances where it would be aborted after only a year's trial.

Mr. Berube also quotes from a letter sent by Robert Bothwell to several individuals who wanted to know what had to be done to bring OEO voucher money to their city. Bothwell enumerated a long list of political leaders and interest groups whose support would be helpful. Mr. Berube seems to think that this showed our innocent expectation that such support would be easy to get. All it indicated was that OEO is more likely to support an experiment which has broad support than one which has narrow support.

(3) Finally, with respect to my own views, Mr. Berube claims I have an "aversion to community control." This is nonsense. Where "community control" is a device for establishing black control over predominantly black public schools, I support it wholeheartedly. But unlike Mr. Berube, I do not belive that my support ensures that this change is either politically likely or educationally important. On the contrary, black control over black schools remains elusive in cities with predominantly white populations. Furthermore, even where black control *has* been established (e.g. Gary, Indiana; Compton, California; Ravenswood, California) the *educational* benefits are hard to discern. "Community control" is a strategy whereby one group of adults takes control from another. It leaves the position of children vis à vis adults unchanged, unless the attitudes towards children of the adults who gain control differ radically from those of the adults they displace. While this is sometimes the case (e.g. in Ocean Hill), it is unlikely to be the rule. Black attitudes towards black children are, unfortunately, not all that different from white attitudes towards white children. None of this means that I think black adults should be denied the right to run black schools. It just means that when black adults replace white ones on school boards or in principalships, we should not expect big changes in black children's reading scores, much less in their chances of adult success. Such naive expectations only bring bitterness later.

Berube's optimism about community control seems to derive from his idea that even in the absence of other changes in society, school systems can produce more social mobility than has been common in the past two generations. As "evidence" for his optimism he cites the successes of the military, the Catholic church, the kibbutz, and Headstart. This evidence is unpersuasive. Studies of the military have shown that the skills learned in the military do not translate into better civilian jobs or higher income for most veterans. Studies of Catholic schools are more encouraging (which is one reason why vouchers have a certain appeal), but no study of Catholic schools has been able to determine whether these schools' alumni succeed because of the schools' educational methods or merely because Catholic schools attract the upwardly mobile and (especially at the secondary level) exclude those who learn slowly or cause a lot of trouble.

The kibbutz is at once the most encouraging and the most discouraging example of all. The kibbutz *does* seem to help disadvantaged children. But nobody familiar with kibbutz life supposes that the extraordinary performance of kibbutz pupils with "disadvantaged" parents results primarily from kibbutz schooling. Rather, everyone assumes that success results from the fact that the kibbutz has drastically altered the entire social and cultural context in which such children are raised, so that they are hardly more "disadvantaged" than young kibbutzniks with highly educated parents. This seems to confirm the judgment that

Summer Sessions

CONFERENCES ON THE MINISTRY

St. Norbert Abbey, De Pere, Wis. 54115. April 12-16. First of six conferences to extend through July. First conference speakers include: Leonard Swidler, Temple University; Joseph Blenkinsopp, Notre Dame; Francois Houtart, Louvain. *Inquire:* Chairman.

DELBARTON CONFERENCE

St. Mary's Abbey, Morristown, N.J. 07960. June 13-18. "Prayer of the Church and Prayer of the Heart." Claude Peifer, O.S.B., St. Bede Abbey; Gabriel Coless, O.S.B., St. Mary's Abbey; Alexander Schmemann, St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary; James H. Pain, Drew University; M. Lawrence Snow, Community United Methodist Church, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.; Francis Hall, Powell House, Old Chatham, N.Y. *Inquire:* Director.

INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

College of Mount St. Joseph, Mount St. Joseph, Ohio. 45051. June 14-19. "Christian Hope and the Future of Man." Andrew Greeley, Anthony Padovano, Eugene Kennedy, Peter Riga, Alfred McBride, Aelred Tegels, O.S.B., Thomas Francoeur, Mary Reid Newland, C. J. Van der Poel, Lawrence J. Losoncy, Rosalie Ryan, C.S.J., Paul Shanley, and Richard McGrath. *Inquire:* Rev. Angelo della Picca.

SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR SEMINARY EDUCATION

University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind. 46556. June 15-30. Co-sponsored by Notre Dame and the Boston Theological Institute, under the directorship of Tjaard G. Hommes and Richard T. Cleary, S. J. Faculty include: Robert E. Treese, Boston University and Donald McNeill, C.S.C., Notre Dame University. *Inquire:* Dr. Hommes, University of Notre Dame.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

schools alone cannot do the job.

As for Head Start, the evidence that it has any permanent effect on children's cognitive development is feeble. While no really good data is available, the data that *is* available, notably the Westinghouse survey, suggests that most Head Start Centers made little specific effort to develop disadvantaged children's cognitive skills, and that (perhaps as a result) the effect of attending Head Start was extremely transient—much like kindergarten.

Mr. Berube seems to believe that my skepticism about the likely benefits of educational reform makes any proposal with which I am associated suspect. Perhaps. But my own feeling is the opposite. I have spent ten years searching for evidence that we can reduce the level of inequality in America by reforming our schools. The more I have learned, the more convinced I have become that this hope is an illusion. If so, it is also a dangerous illusion, for by trying to use the schools to solve adult social problems, we frequently make schools less humane, pleasant environments for children. We also distract attention from the real problems of racial and economic inequality in adult society—problems which have to be tackled directly, not through our children.

CHRISTOPHER JENCKS
Center for the Study of
Public Policy

P.S. For future reference, I should point out that the voucher system discussed by Mr. Berube was developed by the Center for the Study of Public Policy (CSPP), not the Center for Policy Studies, and that the Center in question has no connection with Harvard University, but is an independent, non-profit research group. I suspect Mr. Berube has CSPP confused with the Center for Educational Policy Research at Harvard, some of whose staff members worked on contract for CSPP on this project.

Reply

Even cursory reading of the Jencks plan shows that the key idea is socio-economic (and racial) integration. Thus, as the OEO has adopted it the Jencks voucher plan would foster integration. Of course, state legislatures may change the plan, but then it would not be the voucher plan as Jencks conceived it, and that is the idea I examined in my piece. That is not to say there are no *fears* the plan will foster segregation. Surely the NAACP and Mr. Robison's American Jewish Congress deeply feel so. Perhaps that is because segregationists might consider the voucher plan as a means to segregate schools, *if* they could control the voucher system. But Jencks' plan does not merely present safeguards against segregation; the voucher system is predicated on integration as a major idea. Public schools are second-class institutions as they are now constituted. The voucher plan attempts to rejuvenate them.

Christopher Jencks states that I talked to no one involved with the voucher plan and wrote my "fanciful" analysis

Immediate Prospect

IN THESE DAYS of increasing national tension over the war, dissension over the Administration's proposed domestic policies and debate involving the church, Commonweal functions as a most topical forum. In the next few weeks, for example, we plan to publish articles of opinion by such significant authors as Frank Getlein, Richard P. McBrien, Garry Wills, Kilian McDonnell, Michael Novak, Gerard Sloyan, Harvey Cox and Eugene C. Kennedy.

At the same time Commonweal will provide outspoken and perceptive reviews of current books which are attracting, or meriting, special attention. Critics will include, among others, Richard Halloran, Nora Magid, Luther West, Sally Cunneen, Maurice Berube, Eugene Fontinell, Leonard Kriegel, Kathy Mulherin, Saul Maloff and Maisie Ward.

This immediate prospect comprises a good sample of what Commonweal subscribers may expect in the months ahead. Send for a trial subscription.

17 Issues for $3

For New Subscribers Only

COMMONWEAL, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016

Please send the next 17 issues of Commonweal to:

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY, STATE, ZIP .....

☐ I prefer the regular one-year subscription at $12.

3/19/71

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

presumably from a closet at the Institute for Community Studies. If Mr. Jencks had asked his associates he would have learned that I was a somewhat reluctant consultant on vouchers for the city of Trenton. I was hired by the Trenton poverty program over objections that I was ambivalent about the plan. I met and talked at length on vouchers with the chief field representative Robert Bothwell and others. So much for that. As for his main points:

(1) Mr. Jencks would like to give the impression that vouchers are in great demand. I have been a close observer of the educational scene these past two decades and I have not exactly noted a large groundswell of support from *either* white middle class parents or black parents. My experience in Trenton bore that out.

(2) It is indicative of Jencks' mindset that he clings to the 1950s' academic notion of "black apathy." Where has he been these last few years? And didn't the NAACP oppose his plan? Black parents in New York City were not exactly apathetic those five years they demonstrated against individual schools for an educationally accountable system. The concept of black apathy is always invoked by academic apologists for the *status quo*. Moreover, Mr. Jencks still clings to the belief that he could obtain a consensus of support for his plan.

(3) As a third objection, Mr. Jencks informs me that he is *not* opposed to the concept of community control. Yet he discounts it as being of educational worth. It was in this fashion that Mr. Jencks damned with faint praise the community control movement in the pages of the *New York Times Magazine*, at the height of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville strike. Perhaps Mr. Jencks was *politically* unaware of the repercussions of his argument in such a heated context, written in the largest weekly magazine in America.

Both community control and vouchers politically restructure school systems. To say one is political and the other is educational is doubletalk. Both were untried in terms of educational effect when considered. However, the Institute has completed a three-year evaluation, to be published soon, of the three experimental districts in New York City and has found them, on balance, to have educationally succeeded, and with promise of greater success had they been continued without political opposition.

Jencks says my error about community control is that I expect "social mobility" without "other changes in society." It is a good point. However, Jencks confuses social mobility with the expectation that the poor can learn; one does not necessarily follow the other, given discrimination patterns.

And Mr. Jencks knows as well as I that there is no conclusive evidence—one way or the other—that the poor can or cannot learn. Most of the studies both he and I cite in respective magazine pieces are contradictory and offer, at best, only indications. The Westinghouse Study on Head Start, as Mr. Jencks fails to mention, was a highly suspect *ex post facto* study whose methods were roundly criticized. What the Westinghouse study did was to examine the highly beneficial effects of Head Start years after in a public school setting (I analyzed this study for *Commonweal* in May of 1969) and claim that Head Start failed although it had boosted IQ's.

Of course, schools alone cannot wipe out inequality. But I am not prepared to accept the implication that they can do nothing and therefore educationists should just toy with experiments. Neither are there indications that the schools cannot educate. Contrary to Jencks' statements, these indications are positive in the areas I cited. The Army *has*, through Project 100,000, transformed functional illiterates into competent technicians; the Israeli Kibbutz *has* boosted the IQ's of poor Jews some 40 points, as even Arthur Jensen acknowledges; and Greeley and Rossi *discount* the power of selective admissions in Catholic schools, thus implying that poor Catholics have done well in those schools.

Vouchers may work. My main criticism was that I did not think that Mr. Jencks *believed* they could work for the poor, for whom they were intended. His reply to my article confirms that observation. The more he has learned about reforming schools the more he is convinced that reform will not reduce inequality. The hope is, he says, an illusion. And that is the sad state of America today when one of its educational theorists, sponsoring a major political school change, feels he must deal in illusions . MAURICE R. BERUBE

Community and Ministry

"A Look Around to Look Ahead"

ROSEMARY RUETHER
EUGENE BIANCHI
JAMES Mc GIVERN

All interested in Renewal invited.

April 16—8 P.M. April 17—All Day

Information, Registration:

Detroit Chapter
SOCIETY OF PRIESTS FOR A FREE MINISTRY
12709 Pembroke, Detroit, Mich. 48235

Classified

Institute

● BIBLICAL INSTITUTE, Trinity College, Burlington, Vermont 05401. June 13-18. Ellis, Quinn, Collins, Mowry, Borowitz. Write: DIRECTOR.

Book

● HAVE YOU GOT A FRIEND who's all confused about what's happening in the Catholic Church today? Why don't you give him "The Lord of Confusion," a good guidebook for anyone in these days? Order from your bookseller, or send $5 to DIMENSION BOOKS, P.O. Box 811, Denville, N.J. 07834.

Journal

● LATEST ISSUE, *Journal of Pastoral Counseling*, features articles on Psychotherapy vs. Spiritual Direction, Illuminated Craziness and Psychoanalysis of Scrupulosity. Plus! Semi-annual, $6 per year. Dept. C, PASTORAL COUNSELING, Iona College, New Rochelle, N.Y. 10801.

Classified Rates

Per word (single insertion) 50c
Per word, 3 times 48c
Per word, 7 times 45c
Per word, 13 times 42c

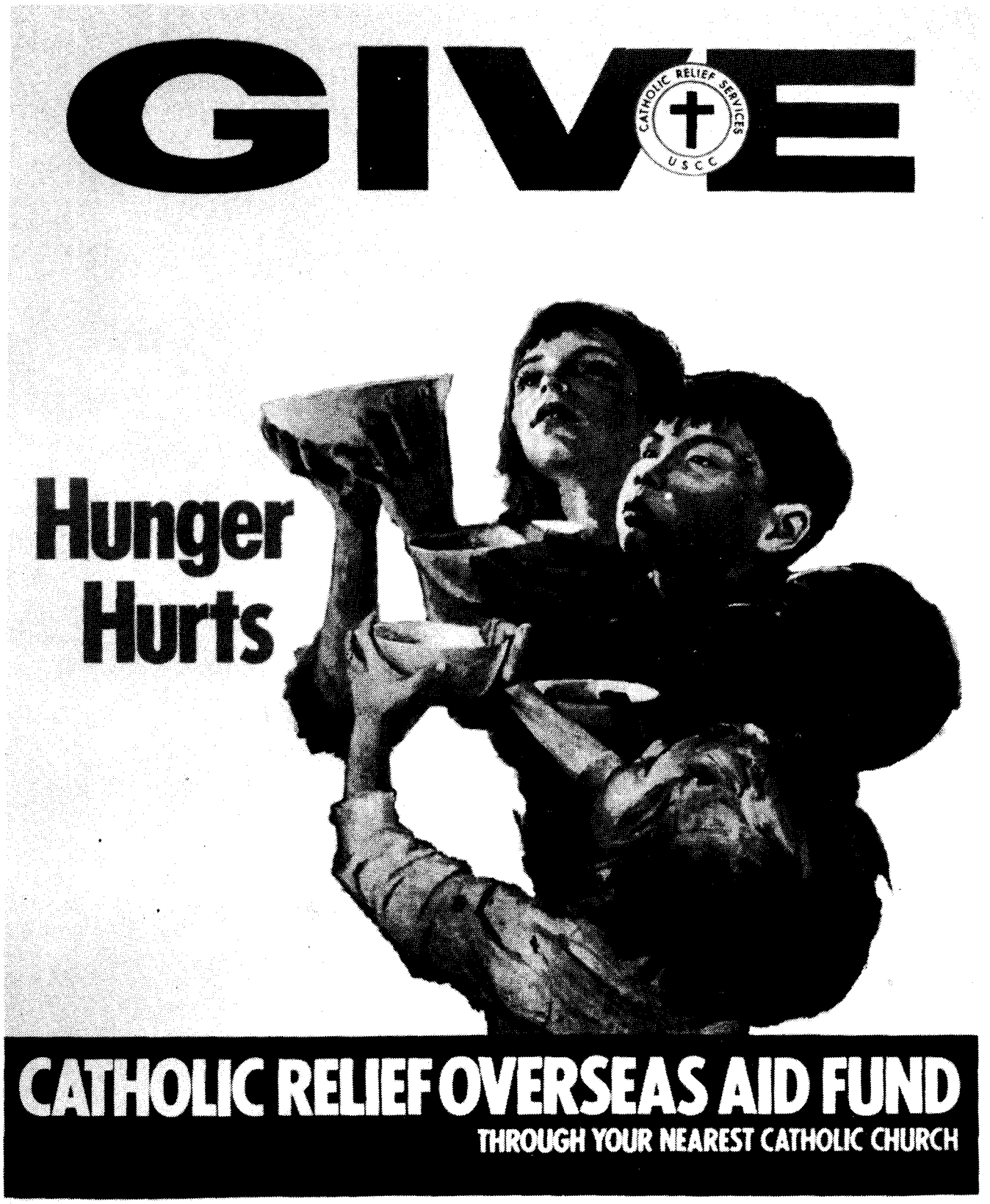
Twelve words minimum.

For box numbers at Commonweal add 50c per insertion.

Classified payable with order, monthly in advance for more than 3 times.

Commonweal
232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



GIVE TO EASE PAINS OF HUNGER. The official poster of the 25th annual *Catholic Relief Ovearseas Aid Fund Appeal* is a poignant reminder to all Americans as to what we can do to ease the suffering of hungry humans throughout the world. Proceeds from this once-a-year appeal, to be held nationwide March 14-21, support the global works of mercy conducted by Catholic Relief Services. Over $5-million contributed to last year's appeal generated a total of more than $158-million in aid programs conducted by the American Catholic overseas agency. That's a return of 30 to 1 for every dollar donated. Send your contribution to the nearest Catholic church or to CATHOLIC OVERSEAS AID, Empire State Bldg., New York, N.Y 10001.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED